

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING NOTES – DECEMBER 13, 2012
CITY HALL, SISTER CITIES ROOM

ATTENDANCE

Present

Emma Beall
Rosario Casiano
William Chesley
Andria Cook
Rose Dawson

Mike Gilmore
Samuel Hanoura
J. Glenn Hopkins
Timothy Kennedy
Mike Mackey

Tammy Mann
Gwen Mullen
Jeffrey Murphy
Cynthia Skinner
Marc Williams

Excused Absent

Victoria Cattaneo
Sheryl Gorsuch
Councilwoman Alicia Hughes
Gregory C. Hutchings

Timothy Peterson
Sonia Price
Margaret Walsh

Unexcused Absent

Joyce Rawlings

Officials

Debra Collins

Guests

Noraine Buttar
Dr. Abeba Fekade

Allen Lomax

Staff

Jacqueline Coachman
Carol Farrell

Ron Frazier

Deborah Warren

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Gwen Mullen made a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. The motion was seconded by Rose Dawson and passed unanimously.

CLARIFICATION OF COMMISSION ROLE IN ADVOCACY

The agenda item was introduced Glen Hopkins, Chair of the Advocacy Committee. He noted that because the Advocacy Committee had proposed op ed pieces, forums and a candidate survey, clarification of what constitutes advocacy was in order. City Attorney James Banks and Rose Boyd, Special Assistant, City Manager's Office, both addressed that issue.

Mr. Banks stated that he is not aware of any city commission that has engaged in activities like those proposed by the Advocacy Committee nor of any relevant ordinance or restriction. He therefore views this as a matter of ethical judgment. The memo he submitted for consideration by the Commission outlined broad parameters. The circumstance he deemed most analogous to the Commission is that of the Sheriff's Office. Deputies are not allowed to participate in political activities while in uniform and the Commission's name is its badge. In addition, Commission members are appointed by the City Council. It can be argued that members of the Commission have an ethical conflict when evaluating the political positions of incumbents who appointed them or candidates who may one day re-appoint them.

Mr. Hopkins introduced Rose Boyd, who serves as Executive Secretary for Boards & Commissions. Ms. Boyd stated she is aware of advocacy activities by other groups but not in the political sphere,

such as state legislation or lobbying for additional funding. She advised against initiatives like the candidates survey since CYFCC would have to work with whoever is elected. CYFCC Chair Tammy Mann expressed appreciation for clarification of the fact that there are allowable advocacy activities. Assistant City Manager Debra Collins noted examples of other allowable activities are advocating for increased access to preschool and initiatives for older youth.

According to Ron Frazier, the ordinance establishing CYFCC outlines allowable advocacy activities. Mike Gilmore stated that in late spring/early summer, Legislative Director Bernie Caton sends out a request for legislation desired for the next session. Mr. Banks noted op eds are allowable if advocating for an initiative. In response, Mr. Hopkins asked what if an op ed opposes City Council. Ms. Boyd cited the provision in the code that states if a group wants to advocate for state legislation, it must have City Council approval. She advised that the Commission not engage the City Council adversely in a public forum. Mr. Banks stated the City Council would take the position that they are the policy making body of the Commission. Ms. Collins advised that CYFCC inform the City Council prior to publishing an op ed.

YOUTH MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Cynthia Skinner, co-chair of the Design Team, provided a report on the Design Team Retreat of December 1 as well as the webinar the preceding Monday. The webinar, which was interactive and afforded team members the opportunity to ask questions, introduced Ready by 21 concepts and the planning process for the youth master plan. A poll was also conducted to glean input from the Design Team as to the key tenets that will guide the plan. In addition to core principles and Ready by 21 concepts, a focus of the retreat was outcomes and indicators. Actual strategic plans by city entities were used to better acquaint team members with the difference between the two.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Rose Dawson reported that the membership committee has gathered the names of those who served on the Youth Policy Commission and the Early Childhood Commission. A priority of the committee is a more in-depth understanding of the process and timing for filling CYFCC vacancies.

NEW BUSINESS

Charlotte Clinger reported that a sponsor has been selected for the Alexandria Youth Council and the most immediate priorities are a recruitment drive for new members and the book distribution initiative, which will provide preschoolers with free books.

Mr. Hopkins asked how priorities for the Alexandria Fund for Human Services will be determined. The response of Ms. Collins was that the City Manager has recommended the next round of funding be for one year using existing priorities and that future priorities be aligned with the City Council's strategic plan. The application for the Fund will be available online in January.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Glen Hopkins moved the meeting be adjourned. After a second by Andria Cook, the motion passed.